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## **As Seen In Vogue: An Analytical Observation of Nudity In French and American Vogue**

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The University of Southern Mississippi

AS SEEN IN *VOGUE*: AN ANALYTICAL OBSERVATION OF NUDITY IN  
FRENCH AND AMERICAN *VOGUE*

by

Elizabeth Kiehn

A Thesis  
Submitted to the Honors College of  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Bachelor of Business Administration  
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May 2013



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## Chapter I: Introduction

### Research Purpose

For centuries, Europe has been the leader in fashion production and innovation. At the heart of this continent lies the fashion capital of the world—France. French designers have always been on the cutting edge of fashion. Setting trends, shocking consumers, and enticing the world have been normal everyday activities for them as if it is in their blood. French culture is much more daring and open about sexuality in comparison to American culture, however, American designers and retailers are still heavily influenced by French fashion designs. This begs the question then: Are French fashion magazines equally influential on American fashion magazines?

When flipping through an issue of French or American *Vogue*, one can definitely see similarities between the two; however, if a person reads through them with a more scrutinizing eye, one can see that the images used in French *Vogue* are much more sexual, racy, and suggestive than those that appear in American *Vogue*. In this thesis, the goal of the researcher was to look at issues of French *Vogue* and American *Vogue* and compare the amount of sexual content included in their cosmetic, fragrance, and jewelry advertisements. These types of advertisements were chosen because they appear to contain the most suggestive, sexual images—even in the American *Vogue* issues. This is an interesting comparison because many people never realize how vastly different these cultures can be. Also the fact that both of these magazines are versions of the same publication and still contain such different marketing strategies is key knowledge for internationally published magazines.

## Conceptual Terminology

Many areas observed are subjective, and could be interpreted differently by readers; therefore, the researcher proceeded to define the terms that could have different meanings to different readers. This list serves to make clear any misunderstandings about any terms that are referred to in the following text.

1. Nudity- any amount of exposed skin that would otherwise seem socially acceptable to be covered with clothing in Western culture
2. Implied nudity- when a male or female subject has no body parts exposed, but appears to be completely nude (ex. shown only from the chest up, but has no clothing on)
3. Suggestive posing- a male or female subject posing in a way that conveys an overall sexual message
4. Breast- chest area of a male or female subject (cleavage, bottom of breast, nipple exposure)
5. Stomach- middle abdominal or navel area on a male or female subject
6. Upper-Thigh- area of the leg any higher than the middle of the thigh on a female or male subject
7. Buttocks- the rear, most upper part of the leg of a male or female subject
8. Lower Back- the lowest area of the back just before one reaches the buttocks

These terms were defined by the researcher and were based upon the needs of this particular study.

### **Limitations**

In this thesis, there were many forms of limitation in the study and work. The study focused strictly on American and French issues of *Vogue*, one of the most renowned fashion magazines in the world. While there were many other respectable and internationally published fashion magazines from which to choose, *Vogue* was selected because it was easily accessible and because it is so well known to most of the general population. The researcher also limited the observation to issues from the months of January, February, and March of 2012 so that there was a parallel screening of the two versions of *Vogue*. Another limitation that should be noted is that the researcher was the only individual analyzing the advertisements. Because of this caution should be made in generalizing the findings beyond this sample.

### **Summary**

The differences between American and French culture have long been a subject that researches have analyzed. This study compares advertisements that are run in both countries and compares the amount of nudity contained. It is important to point out that the purpose of this study was only to observe and analyze what was out there in comparison between the different magazines' advertisements. The limitations of both the study and previous research done on the topic were also noted.

## Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter serves to provide an overview of the literature that has already been conducted in relation to the magazine that was chosen, *Vogue*, the differences in French and American cultures and advertising practices, and the differences between the French and American publications of *Vogue*.

### Brief History of *Vogue*

One factor that many people do not realize is that *Vogue* was actually created and started in America—not France. Because of the French title, however, many people just associate it with the country of France. Arthur B. Turnure was the founder of the magazine and a “...Princetonian socialite with an interest in publishing” (Hill, 2004, p. 6). The first edition of *Vogue* was printed on December 17, 1892 (Hill, 2004). As the publication grew and received more and more credit and praise, “as seen in *Vogue*” (p. 13) became coined as a popular advertising slogan that almost instantly gave credibility and prestige to any product that possessed it.

The creation of *Vogue* in the American culture allowed American designers to be recognized and receive praise for their work especially around the time of World War I. The war separated American and French designers for a significant amount of time, making it possible for American designers to create fashions that differed from those in France. By the time French fashions reappeared in America, they were “...viewed as merely vulgar exaggerations of famous silhouettes that created barely a ripple against the showings of America fall collections” (Hill, 2004, p. 67). It is impressive to see how the magazine has now grown and evolved into something that is respected by both opposing

cultures, giving credit to great icons in the fashion industry, but still allowing the different countries to maintain their own identities within the publication.

### **Comparison of American and French Advertising**

In the literature, the difference between French and American advertising is an issue that is present in many publications. Many scholars and researchers have looked into the vast differences between the two countries' marketing and advertising. In their article published in the *Journal of Advertising*, Biswas, Olsen, and Carlet (1992) found that in order to be successful in multiple countries, businesses must be able to understand that there are certain things that are and are not acceptable in different cultures. They state that while "...most marketers recognize the benefits of standardized advertising, there are still formidable cultural barriers that often render its use impractical" (p. 73) when one business is advertising in multiple markets, in this case different countries. Recognition of differing lifestyles and cultural practices is important when marketing in different countries.

In another study, Lamont (1992) looked at the differences between French and American culture, made note about the differences in advertising between the two countries and mentioned how America has the Public Broadcasting system that limits and censors what viewers see in television advertisements. Taylor, Hoy and Haley (1996) specifically looked into why French advertising is so important to the American industry and academics alike in their article entitled "How French Advertising Professionals Develop Creative Strategy" (p. 1). They discussed how, in comparison to American advertising, French advertising is typically more emotional and, specifically, more likely

“...to use sex appeals” (Taylor, et al., 1996, p. 2). Because there are so many differences between the two cultures, yet they are still so closely related and intertwined, it is important when advertising in either country that businesses respect this matter.

### **Cultural Differences in Fashion Magazines**

While researchers have often looked at strictly marketing differences, there is also a large difference worthy of being noted specifically in the fashion world. Kopnina (2007) addresses the fact that “Fashion studies are seen by social scientists as something superficial, fleeting and undeserving serious attention” (p. 363); however, fashion plays a major role in every individual’s life, whether he or she chooses to admit it or not. What a person chooses to wear on a daily basis is how he or she chooses to present him or herself to the world around him or her. Fashion creates an identity for people and it reflects the culture in which they are submerged; thus, marketers must keep this in mind when choosing how they make the sale in different cultures to different identities.

Kopnina (2007) points out that there is no mistake that culture and fashion are woven together and that they affect many aspects of daily life for individuals, such as what they buy or where they shop (p. 367). In her article, “The World According to *Vogue*,” Kopnina analyzes the advertising content in Russian, British, and French *Vogue*. She notes the lack of sexuality and powerful women featured in Russian *Vogue*, the amount of cliché advertisements and editorials in French *Vogue*, and the amount of foreign advertisements and national symbols in the British publication. Kopnina focused on the advertisements’ “graphic features” (p. 370), including advertisements and editorial

content, in order to highlight the differences and similarities between the different nations.

Authors frequently note that the introduction of nudity in fashion magazine images occurred following World War II (Hill, 2004; Peres 2008). The early 1960s seemed to be a new era that photographers were trying to portray in their images. Sexual exploration was one way these photographers began to push the envelope. By the end of this decade, Americans began to be less shocked and surprised when they saw nudity in their fashion magazines. To push the envelope even further, 1970s renowned photographer, Helmut Newton, began to go as far as to aim for sexual aggression and violence in fashion shoots. After a life threatening experience, Newton began to create “...an erotically charged world full of sexual predators and sexual prey” (Peres, 2008, p. 89).

Newton became known for images that often included an element of theater and sexual tension. “Newton’s images for American *Vogue*’s “Story of Ohh,” featuring a man, two women, and a dog, are considered uncompromising in their depiction of open, forceful lust” (p. 89). Newton caused quite a scandal when the piece was released, and ironically enough, the title that he chose was referring to a French pornographic novel entitled *The Story of O* (Peres, 2008). While nudity is often considered shocking, and even disrespectful to some, there is no denying that sex appeal is a key component when advertisers are thinking of ways to market their products.

Beetles and Harris (2005) concluded that the amount of sex appeal deemed acceptable in advertising varies throughout Europe and the world. Beetles and Harris



specifically focused on the attitudes that consumers have toward female nudity in advertising images. They state that "...the female nude has long been the subject of the artist's gaze, creating tension between art, critics and moralists for centuries" (p. 398). The inclusion of moralists in this discussion says something about the fact that many viewers feel uncomfortable and do not believe that nudity is acceptable in mass publications. This is where the differences between the French and American cultures come into play. One must remember that "Concepts of nudity are based on symbolic interpretations that are both personal and cultural" and therefore, vary between all peoples as to what is accepted and what is not (Storm, 1987, p. 101). When walking along the street, many French people may not be fazed by the image of a nude woman on the cover of a magazine; however, if the same image were publicly displayed on an American newsstand, there would be a complete and total uproar. This says a great deal about the differences in cultural norms and moral acceptances between the French and American populations.

## **Hypothesis**

Based on the literature it appears that there are significant differences between what is culturally acceptable in regards to public nudity in America and France. Because the French are a more openly sexual and emotional culture, it is more apparent in public.

Hypothesis: French advertisements in *Vogue* will contain more nudity when compared to the advertisements in issues of American *Vogue*.

## Summary

The differences in the cultures of America and France have been a subject that researchers have studied for many reasons. Specifically in international business, it is important in advertising to be aware of the differences in these cultures. In previous research related to this topic, many notes have been made about the degree of sexuality contained in each nation's typical advertisements. The intention of this study is to analyze and compare the amount of nudity present in each country's editions of *Vogue*.

### **Chapter III: Methodology**

This chapter provides a detailed account of how the research was conducted. It gives details on how the magazines were chosen, which advertisements were selected as relevant, and what variables were used to analyze the advertisements.

Based on the literature review and observations of previous researchers' works, the following hypothesis was developed:

Hypothesis: French advertisements in *Vogue* will contain more nudity when compared to the advertisements in issues of American *Vogue*.

The following methods were used in order to determine whether the hypothesis is supported or rejected.

#### **Data Collection Plan and Scale Development**

Based on the literature reviewed and the researcher's casual observation of American and French *Vogue*, an instrument was developed to record the findings. In Kopnina's (2007) focused on the graphic features to highlight differences and similarities between different nations' versions of *Vogue*. Similar to Kopnina, the researcher chose variables considered to include and highlight the amount of nudity and sexual suggestiveness in the advertisements. The variables included for study were the same for each *Vogue* issue and advertisement. The instrument was designed to record the number of exposed (a) breasts, (b) stomachs, (c) upper thighs, (d) buttocks, and (e) lower backs. The (f) suggestiveness of the pose, the (g) number of people and (h) gender of the subjects was analyzed as well as the (i) setting of the photo. The settings, adapted from

Paek and Shah (2011), were identified as home, workplace, leisure place, outdoor, studio, and other.

In order to scale the suggestiveness of the pose (f), the researcher adapted a scale by Piron and Young (1996) and refined by Paek and Nelson (2007) in which ads were assigned to numbers 1 through 10, with 1 being the least suggestive pose and a 10 being sexually explicit (Table 1). Labels were given to each number to give the researcher a general guide when analyzing the poses of the subjects in each advertisement.

**Table 1. Rankings Used to Measure Suggestiveness**

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Level of Suggestiveness</b>
1	not suggestive
2	slightly suggestive
3	mildly suggestive
4	somewhat suggestive
5	suggestive
6	more suggestive
7	clearly suggestive
8	intensely suggestive
9	sexually suggestive
10	explicit

Other variables analyzed were the (j) facial expression of the subjects, (k) whether the subject was a model, actor, or athlete, (l) if tattoos were visible in the shot, (m) the type of covering of the subjects, (n) if sweat was present and visible, (o) product placement, and (p) the number of pages the advertisement covered.

It is also important to note, that during the literature review, studies conducted on the facial expressions of subjects in photographs were sought. Unfortunately the researcher could not find any previous, relevant studies done on this subject matter. Because there was no validated scale to use, the researcher had to come up with a new

way of analyzing this component of the advertisements. Additionally, the presence or lack of sweat (n) was later omitted because it was not found that any advertisements showed any presence of sweat on the subjects photographed. These additional variables were chosen based on the researcher's general observations of the advertisements. Variables (j) through (p) were thought to be relevant to the purpose of the study and would produce the most telling results in regards to the nudity and sexual suggestiveness contained in the advertisements.

Because there was no previous research found regarding labeling and scaling facial expressions, the researcher developed a method to identify and rank these in comparison to one another. The facial expression labels were listed from least sexually suggestive to most sexually suggestive from the researcher's personal opinion. The list was compiled as follows: angelic, peaceful, serene, pretty, alluring, intense, sexy, come hither, and enraptured. The expressions that were perceived as the most sexually suggestive were given titles such as alluring, intense, sexy, come hither and enraptured. If the subjects were just meant to appear pretty and innocent the expression titles given to them were angelic, peaceful, serene, and pretty.

### **Obtaining *Vogue* Issues**

The researcher collected issues of American *Vogue* and French *Vogue* for the months of January, February, and March of 2012 from various vendors on [www.ebay.com](http://www.ebay.com). The vendors selected specialize in selling specific back issues of both American and French *Vogue*. *Vogue* was chosen because, as mentioned in the literature review, *it* is one of the most renowned and respected fashion magazines in the world, and

is widely read by most of the general population. Fashion moguls of all nationalities respect and look to this magazine as a primary source of the best in fashion.

### **Selecting Advertisements for Study**

Once the desired issues were obtained, the researcher identified the advertisements in the magazines and tallied the results found using the data collection instrument. The original research plan limited the advertisements under investigation to jewelry, cosmetics, and fragrances because, from the issues observed by the researcher prior to this study, those were the most risqué advertisements and usually the ones that contained nudity. Once all of the jewelry, cosmetic, and fragrance advertisements were identified and labeled, the results were organized into Appendix 1. Preliminary findings revealed that the fragrance advertisements contained the most nudity and suggestive poses. Because of time constrictions the researcher modified the original research plan, limiting the focus of the study to fragrance advertisements only.

### **Data Collection and Reduction**

Once all of the images were examined, the results were formatted into a table (Table 2), so that they could be easily viewed and compared. Because of the subjectivity of the data analysis and the use of the scale and graphs, this study was a mixture of qualitative and quantitative research. Once the findings were compiled into Table 2 it was much easier to compare the different publications and month issues. After viewing all of the cosmetic, fragrance and jewelry advertisements, a decision was made to limit further analysis to fragrance advertisements only because these ads contained the majority of nudity and sexual suggestiveness. There was also an almost even distribution between the

fragrance advertisements contained in the American and French issues (American, n=10; French n=9).

**Table 2. Fragrance Advertisement Analysis**

	Breast	Stomach	Upper-thigh	Buttocks	Lower back	Suggestiveness of Pose	# of People	Setting	Facial Expression	Model vs. Actor	Tattoos	Covering	Product Placement	# of pages
<b>AMERICAN ADVERTISEMENTS</b>														
<b><u>January</u></b>														
Ad1-BCBG Maxazria					X	2	1 female	studio	come hither	model	none	dress/fabric	bottom corner	1
<b><u>February</u></b>														
Ad1-Gucci						7	1 male, 1 female	studio	intense	2 actors	male	no covering	bottom corners	2
<b><u>March</u></b>														
Ad1-Chanel			X			1	1 female	studio	serene	model	none	flowers	holding it(large)	2
Ad2-Burberry	X	X	X	X		8	1 female	studio	allure-ing	model/actress	none	open trench	bottom corner	2
Ad3-Gucci						7	1 male, 1 female		intense	2 actors	male	no covering	bottom corners	1
Ad4-Michael Kors						5	1 female	studio	sexy	model	none	Sweater (draped)	bottom corner	1
Ad5-Donna			X			4	1 female	studio	sexy	model/actress	none	sweater	bottom corner	1



Karan														
Ad6- cle de peau						1	1 female	studio	angelic	actress	none	N/A	bottom corner	1
Ad7- Elie Saab	X		X			3	1 female	out- doors (street)	allure- ing	model	none	dress	bottom corner	1
Ad8- Narciso Rodriguez						1	1 female	studio	peace- ful	model	none	N/A	bottom corner	1
<b>FRENCH ADVERTISEMENTS</b>														
<b><u>January</u></b>														
Ad1- Lancome						2	1 female	studio	pretty	actress	none	dress	on her back	2
Ad2- Dolce & Gabbana						2	1 female	studio	sexy	actress	none	lace top	bottom corner	2
Ad3- Gucci	X					9	1 male, 1 female		enrapt ured	2 actors	male	no covering	bottom corner	2
Ad4- Yves Saint Laurent	X					6	1 female	workpl ace(co uch)	allurin g	actress	none	dress	cleavage , side page	2
Ad5- Givenchy		X				3	1 female	studio	sexy	model	none	top/fabric	bottom corner	1
Ad6- Chanel						4	1 female	studio	sexy	actress	none	coat	hand/mo uth	1
Ad7- Burberry			X			4	1 female	studio	allurin g	model/ actress	none	trench	bottom corner	1

<u>February</u>														
Ad1-Zadig	X	X				5	1 male, 1 female	outdoor(motorcycle)	sexy	Model/athlete	none	open vest	right page	1
<u>March</u>														
Ad1-Roberto Cavalli	X	X				3	1 female	studio	sexy	model/actress	none	dress	page (large)	2

## **Data Analysis**

Similar to the method employed in Kopnina's (2007) study, the researcher developed a scale to gauge the range and amount of nudity and suggestive images contained in the advertisements. The suggestiveness of the poses were rated on a scale from 1 to 10 based on the researcher's reaction to them with 1 indicating the lowest level of suggestiveness and a 10 indicating the highest level of suggestiveness (see Table 1). Then each of the variables analyzed were counted and recorded into Appendix 1. Further research was conducted to confirm the profession (Table 2, item k) of the subjects in the photographs. This included the researcher's prior knowledge about the subjects' professions, a simple Google search, or information from [www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com). Once all of the variables were analyzed, the researcher began comparing the results—the ratings for sexually suggestive poses were averaged and a percentage was taken for each variable.

## **Summary**

The general steps taken by the researcher were pretty simple and easy to follow. Scales were developed and variables were selected to analyze the advertisements. Back issues of *Vogue* were obtained and all of the cosmetic, fragrance and jewelry advertisements were identified and counted. Then the data sample was reduced to include only fragrance advertisements. The fragrance advertisements were then analyzed to retrieve the results sought out by the researcher.

## **Chapter IV: Analysis and Discussion of Findings**

This chapter gives a detailed overview of all of the results of the research procedures. Comparisons are highlighted between the results obtained from American and French *Vogue*.

### **General Findings**

Once all of the fragrance advertisements were tallied and organized into Table 2, the results showed interesting findings. In total, the American advertisements contained two exposed breasts (20%,  $n=10$ ), but the French advertisements revealed four exposed breasts (44.4%,  $n=9$ ). Only one stomach was shown in the American fragrance advertisements (10%), while the French showed three stomachs (33.3%). The American advertisements revealed more upper-thighs with four exposures (40%) compared to only one French advertisement (11.1%). There was only one American advertisement (10%) that revealed a buttocks and a lower back in one advertisement, and the French advertisements contained no exposed buttocks or lower backs (0%).

The suggestiveness of the poses from the researcher's perspective was scaled from 1 to 10 based on the classifications in Table 1. The American fragrance advertisements ranged from 1 to 8 and averaged a 3.9 ( $n=10$ ). The French advertisements ranged from 2 to 9 and averaged a 4.2 ( $n=9$ ). Almost all of the advertisements, both American and French, contained a single female subject, with the exception of three advertisements, which contained one female and one male (one 2-page American ad, one 2-page French ad and one 1-page French ad; Appendix 2: A2-A3, A18-A19, and A25). All of the American advertisements were set in a studio, except for one that was set outdoors on a street (Appendix 2: A12). Seven French advertisements were set in a studio, one in a lobby (Appendix 2: A20-21), and one outdoors on a motorcycle (Appendix 2: A25).

The subjects' professions were also investigated and noted. In 50% of the American advertisements (n=10), models were used. Only three (30%) contained actors, and two (20%) contained a model/actress. The French advertisements included more actors. Actors comprised 55.6% (n=9) of the subjects in the advertisements. Two advertisements (22.2%) contained model/actresses, one (11.1%) contained a model and an athlete together in the same photo, and only one advertisement (11.1%) contained a model.

Tattoos were not visible in most of the images. However, in a Gucci advertisement that ran in both American (Appendix 2: A2-A3) and French *Vogue* (Appendix 2: A18-A19), there was a pre-existing tattoo reading "Loyalty" on the male's bicep that was visible only in the American image due to the pose.

The methods by which the subjects' bodies were covered in the advertisements varied greatly. Some of the subjects were simply covered with different types of clothing, such as dresses, sweaters, trench coats, tops, and vests. One advertisement featured a nude model, but she was artfully covered with flowers and the actual fragrance bottle (Appendix 2: A4-A5). In another campaign the subjects were shown with nothing covering them (Appendix 2: A2-A3 and A18-A19). Still there were many subjects shown that were intended to have implied nudity and appear to be completely nude, even though the picture was shot only from the shoulders up.

The product placement was also a factor that was tallied in the observation. In 90% of American advertisements (n=10), the bottle of fragrance was simply laid over the image in the bottom corner of the print. In one of the American advertisements, the model was holding a life-sized version of the bottle (Appendix 2: A4-A5). In all, the fragrance companies showed a large preference for not including the bottle in the physical components of the advertisement.

In the French advertisements, the fragrance bottles were incorporated with the subjects more often. In the majority of the advertisements (66.6%, n=9), the bottle was simply laid over the image and was not incorporated in the physical photo shoot. In the Lancôme image (Appendix 2: A14-A15), the bottle was shown on the actress's back. In the Yves Saint Laurent advertisement (Appendix 2: A20-A21), the bottle was placed in the cleavage of the actress and also on the opposite page. In the Chanel advertisement (Appendix 2: A23), the bottle was displayed in the hand and mouth of the actress.

### **Direct Comparisons of the Same Campaign in American and French Issues**

In the American and French magazines, there were two advertisement campaigns that ran in both publications. One was for Gucci Guilty perfumes (Appendix 2: A2-A3 and A18-A19) and the other was for Burberry Body perfume (Appendix 2: A6-A7 and A24). When comparing the American and French advertisements significant differences were noted.

The first of the duplicate advertisements were part of Gucci's "Guilty" campaign. Results of the analysis between the American and French versions showed several differences. In both versions of the advertisements a male and female actor are lying together, and both appear to be nude, but the American (Appendix 2: A2-A3) version is more modest than the French version (Appendix 2: A18-A19).

In the American version of the advertisement, two actors are both intensely gazing into the camera, as if to appear that they have been interrupted from a passionate embrace. However, it is important to note that the female has covered her breast and chest area with her forearm. The advertisement also shows both the men's and women's fragrances in the bottom left and right corners. It is important to note that in this advertisement, where the men's fragrance is shown,

the male subject is looking up at the camera and is more engaged in the viewer rather than his female counterpart.

In the French version of this advertisement (Appendix 2: A18-A19) the image is a bit more risqué. The male is actually still kissing the female, and she appears to be caught off guard, as if the camera were an intruder in their private space. The female subject also has her arm opened up, thus exposing her breast had the male subject not covered it with his bicep. Also, the French advertisement only shows the women's fragrance bottle in the lower right corner and not the men's. In this campaign, where only the women's fragrance is being shown, the male subject is not engaged in the viewer and rather is only paying attention to the female subject.

The second set of duplicate advertisements occurred in the American and French versions for the Burberry "Body" campaign. In the Burberry advertisements, the exact opposite is exhibited—the American advertisement is much more revealing than the French advertisement. In the American, two-page campaign (Appendix 2: A6-A7), the model is shown lying down with nothing but a trench coat covering her. This would be normal and acceptable if the trench coat were not lying open to expose her completely naked body. The jacket is draped so that her breasts are covered, except for her cleavage, and her legs are posed so that none of her genitals are exposed; however, the amount of skin showing is much more than what is shown in its French counterpart.

In the French advertisement (Appendix 2: A24), the image is shown on only one page. The model is shown sitting upright, in the same trench coat that she is wearing in the American photo (Appendix 2: A18-A19); however, this time the trench coat is tied closed around her. She

still appears to be wearing nothing else underneath the coat, but much less skin is exposed than in the American image.

## **Discussion**

To restate, the purpose of this study was to compare the amount of nudity contained in advertisements in American and French *Vogue*. The research methods and data analysis conducted were tailored to test the hypothesis of the study:

Hypothesis: French advertisements in *Vogue* will contain more nudity when compared to the advertisements in issues of American *Vogue*.

Overall, the findings of this research have served to support the hypothesis created by the researcher. When the different variables of the study were compared, the French advertisements clearly exhibited more nudity than the American advertisements. The amount of nudity in the French issues surpassed the American issues in exposed breasts and stomachs, as well as outnumbered the American advertisements in the level of sexually suggestive poses. The subjects shown in the French advertisements also received the higher ranked sexually suggestive facial expressions.

The direct comparison of the Gucci “Guilty” (Appendix 2: A2-A3 and A18-A19) campaign serves to further support the hypothesis because the same actors are shown, in the same general pose, except for the female is more exposed in the French advertisement than she is in the American advertisement. The Burberry “Body” campaign (Appendix 2: A6-A7 and A24) was opposite of the hypothesis, but the advertisements that ran in the issues analyzed were a one-page spread (French) and a two-page spread (American). It would be of relevance to analyze both nationalities’ two-page spread of this specific campaign and compare.



The previous research done on this topic helped to predict that the hypothesis would be supported. Lamont (1992) conducted research on the differences in American and French broadcasting and made reference to the censoring and limits present in American culture and the lack thereof in French culture. Taylor, et al. (1996) explicitly state that there is more sexual and emotional content contained in French advertising. Furthermore Kopnina's (2007) study looked to compare different nationalities of *Vogue* magazine and made note of the lack of sexuality present in Russia when compared to British and French *Vogue*.

The results of the research showed that there has long been a larger presence of nudity in the French culture. With the support of the literature reviewed and the results of the analysis, it is believed that the French will continue to use nudity and sexual suggestiveness in their advertising and publications.

### **Summary**

Because of the time constraints and limitations to the size of this study, the researcher was only able to examine the fragrance advertisements in these magazines. The analysis of the data sample and the literature reviewed, overall, supported the researcher's hypothesis that the French magazines did contain more nudity than the American ones. While there were some contradictions to this, in the case of the Burberry advertisements (Appendix 2: A6-A7 and A24), the overall amount of nudity and sexual suggestiveness was still greater in the French publications.

## **Chapter V: Implications and Recommendations for Future Research**

In this chapter, the relevance of the study is stated for different groups of people and businesses. There are also notes made about limitation that were encountered by the researcher and where those could lead future research endeavors.

### **Relevance of the Study**

The researcher believes that this study can be useful to many different areas of the academic world. It is important to international business and marketing because it clearly shows cultures differences in acceptance in amounts of public nudity. This is important for multinational firms determining how to adapt to those different people. It is also relevant in the fashion world because it looks at the differences between two variations of the same magazine—*Vogue*—one of the most respected fashion magazines in the world. It could also be of intellectual use to the anthropological and sociological studies as it looks at the differences in the people of two dominant cultures of the world.

This study serves to solidify the previous literature written on the American and French cultures. There is a clear difference in the types of advertisements that are accepted and deemed to be successful in the French culture, and they are notably different from the ones in the American culture. International businesses would benefit greatly by taking a note from this study and Gucci's "Guilty" campaign. Something as simple as the placement of the arm of the female subject in an image could change the entire meaning and acceptance of the advertisement as a whole.

The findings from this study can help international businesses when attempting to enter new markets, specifically France. It is important to remember the larger acceptance of nudity and

sexual suggestiveness in this country when developing advertising and marketing strategies for this particular nation. Based on the results of the study and previous research done on the topic, international businesses wishing to be successful in this market should be prepared to contain some amount of nudity or suggestiveness in their advertising and marketing.

The interests of anthropologists and sociologists can also be filled by the findings of this study. One major cultural difference between these nations is exhibited in their publications of *Vogue* magazine. In addition to advertisements in the magazines, the editorial pieces vary greatly in the amount of nudity present and would be a great place to further research this area. The French editorials seemed to contain greater amounts of nudity when compared to the American editorials.

The findings of this study are also relevant to retailers and consumers. Retailers can look at the results here and easily see how clothing and fashion products are sold differently in France as compared to America. Consumers can also be aware, when traveling abroad, that just because they recognize the word *Vogue*, they should expect when the French publication to be filled with more nudity and suggestiveness that would not be present in America.

### **Future Research**

In terms of future research, it would definitely be relevant to compare the amount of nudity contained in an entire publication. When flipping through a French *Vogue*, the amount of nudity is very apparent to the researcher, especially in the editorial spreads. Also it was considered, but no survey of peoples' reactions to and acceptance of the advertisements were conducted because that is a completely different study and one that would not be plausible for

completion within the timeframe allotted for this particular project. It would, however, present useful information for businesses in regards to marketing their products in America and France.

In regards to the Burberry advertisement (Appendix 2: A6-A7 and A24), which contradicted the hypothesis, it is unknown if the French two-page spread of this advertisement would contain the same amount of nudity as the American one did. The French advertisement might have only been less modest because the one-page spread was chosen for that particular month's publishing. It would be important to look further into this and see what the two-page French advertisement was like.

Including different nationalities' versions of *Vogue* would also be another way to continue research on this topic. *Vogue* is currently published in 18 countries worldwide ([www.vogue.com](http://www.vogue.com)) and is sure to contain vast differences among all of those different countries.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude, the researcher's hypothesis was ultimately supported by the results of this study. The study has potential use to many different areas of interest, such as researchers, businesses and consumers. There are many areas and topics to continue the research in this particular area and would also be of great use to many different types of people and businesses alike.

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*Vogue*. (2012, March). Michael Kors advertisement. 03, 297.

*Vogue*. (2012, March). Narciso Rodriguez advertisement. 03, 477.

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**Appendix 1:**  
**Raw Findings by Brand, Product Category and Country**



# Appendix 1. Raw Findings by Brand, Product Category and Country

	Cosmetic						Fragrance						Jewelry						
	Jan		Feb		Mar		Jan		Feb		Mar		Jan		Feb		Mar		
Brand	A*	F*	A	F	A	F	A	F	A	F	A	F	A	F	A	F	A	F	Total
Adler														1					1
Akillis														1					1
Armenta																	1		1
Ash & Tali Lennox																1			1
BCBG							1												1
Bulgari														1					1
Burberry								1			1								2
Calvin Klein																		1	1
Chammet														1					1
Chanel								1			1			1					3
Chopard														1					1
Christian Dior				1		1							1	2					5
Cle de Peau											1								1
Covergirl	1		3																4
David Yurman													1	1			1	1	4
Djula														1					1
Dolce & Gabbana			1		1			1						1					4
Donna Karan											1								1
Elie Saab											1								1
Estee Lauder		1				1													2
Faberge														1					1
Frey Wille														1					1
Giorgio Armani		1																	1

\*A=American; F=French

**Appendix 1. Raw Findings by Brand, Product Category and Country, continued**

	Cosmetic						Fragrance						Jewelry						
	Jan		Feb		Mar		Jan		Feb		Mar		Jan		Feb		Mar		
Brand	A*	F*	A	F	A	F	A	F	A	F	A	F	A	F	A	F	A	F	Total
Gucci								1	1		1			1					4
Harry Winston														1					1
Hermes														1					1
Jane Iredale					1														1
Lancome				1	1			1											3
L'Oreal	1	1	1		1														4
Louis Vuitton														1					1
Makeup Forever			1																1
Maybelline			1		1														2
Messika														1					1
Michael Kors											1								1
Murat														1					1
Nahum														1					1
Narciso Rodriguez											1								1
Omega																1		1	2
Perle																	1		1
Powellato														1					1
Ralph Lauren														1					1
Revlon			1																1
Richard Mille																1			1
Roberto Cavalli												1							1
Sephora					1														1
Sunday Riley	1		1																2

\*A=American; F=French

**Appendix 1. Raw Findings by Brand, Product Category and Country, continued**

	Cosmetic						Fragrance						Jewelry						
	Jan		Feb		Mar		Jan		Feb		Mar		Jan		Feb		Mar		
<b>Brand</b>	<b>A*</b>	<b>F*</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Total</b>
Swarovski														1					<b>1</b>
Tom Ford					1														<b>1</b>
YSL								1											<b>1</b>
Zadig & Voltaire										1									<b>1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>78</b>

\*A=American; F=French

**Appendix 2:**  
**Catalog of Images**

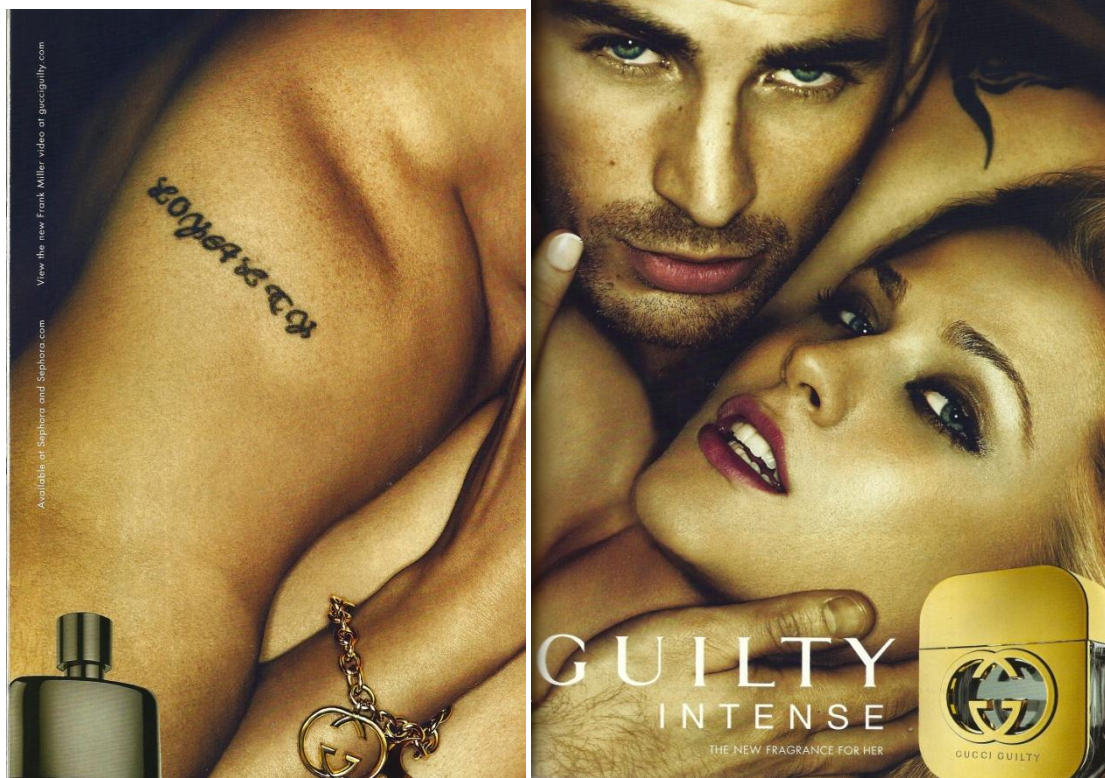
American (A1-A13)

A1 Source: (*Vogue*, 2012, January, 29)





A2-A3 Source: (*Vogue*, 2012, February, 32-33)



A4-A5 Source: (*Vogue*, 2012, March, 62-63)



A6-A7 Source: (*Vogue*, 2012, March, 139-140)





A8 Source: (*Vogue*, 2012, March, 191)

GUCCI GUILTY  
INTENSE

Available at Ulterior's and Ulterior's.com View the new Frank Miller video at gucciguilty.com

GUCCI GUILTY  
INTENSE

THE NEW FRAGRANCE FOR HIM

THE NEW FRAGRANCE FOR HER

GUCCI GUILTY

The advertisement features a close-up of a man and a woman in an intimate embrace. The man, with a light beard and intense green eyes, looks directly at the camera. The woman, with blonde hair and red lipstick, looks up at him. In the bottom left corner is a dark, rectangular bottle of Gucci Guilty Intense for men. In the bottom right corner is a gold, rectangular bottle of Gucci Guilty for women. Both bottles feature the Gucci interlocking G logo. The background is dark and moody, with soft lighting on the couple's faces.



A9 Source: (*Vogue*, 2012, March, 297)

BLOOMINGDALE'S  
SHOP MICHAELKORS.COM

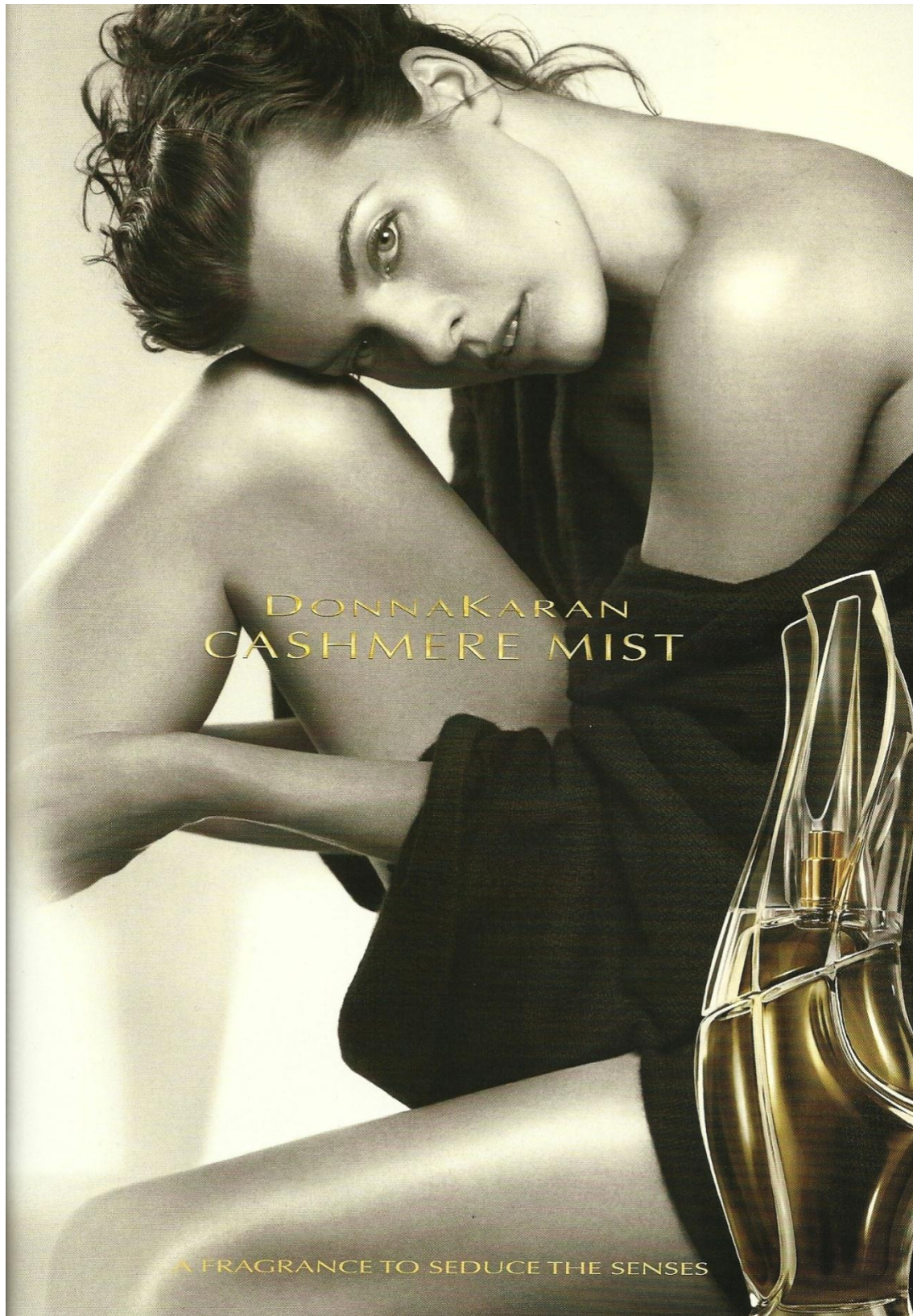
MICHAEL KORS BEAUTY

THE ULTIMATE SIGNATURE FRAGRANCE  
**MICHAEL KORS**

A full-page advertisement for Michael Kors Beauty. The background is a close-up portrait of a woman with long, wavy, light brown hair and green eyes, looking directly at the camera. She is wearing a gold-toned Michael Kors chronograph watch on her left wrist and a thick, textured, light brown knit shawl draped over her shoulders. In the bottom right corner, there is a clear glass bottle of Michael Kors fragrance with a silver cap. The bottle has a gold-colored label with the words "MICHAEL KORS" and "THE ULTIMATE SIGNATURE FRAGRANCE" printed on it. The overall lighting is warm and soft, creating a sophisticated and elegant atmosphere.

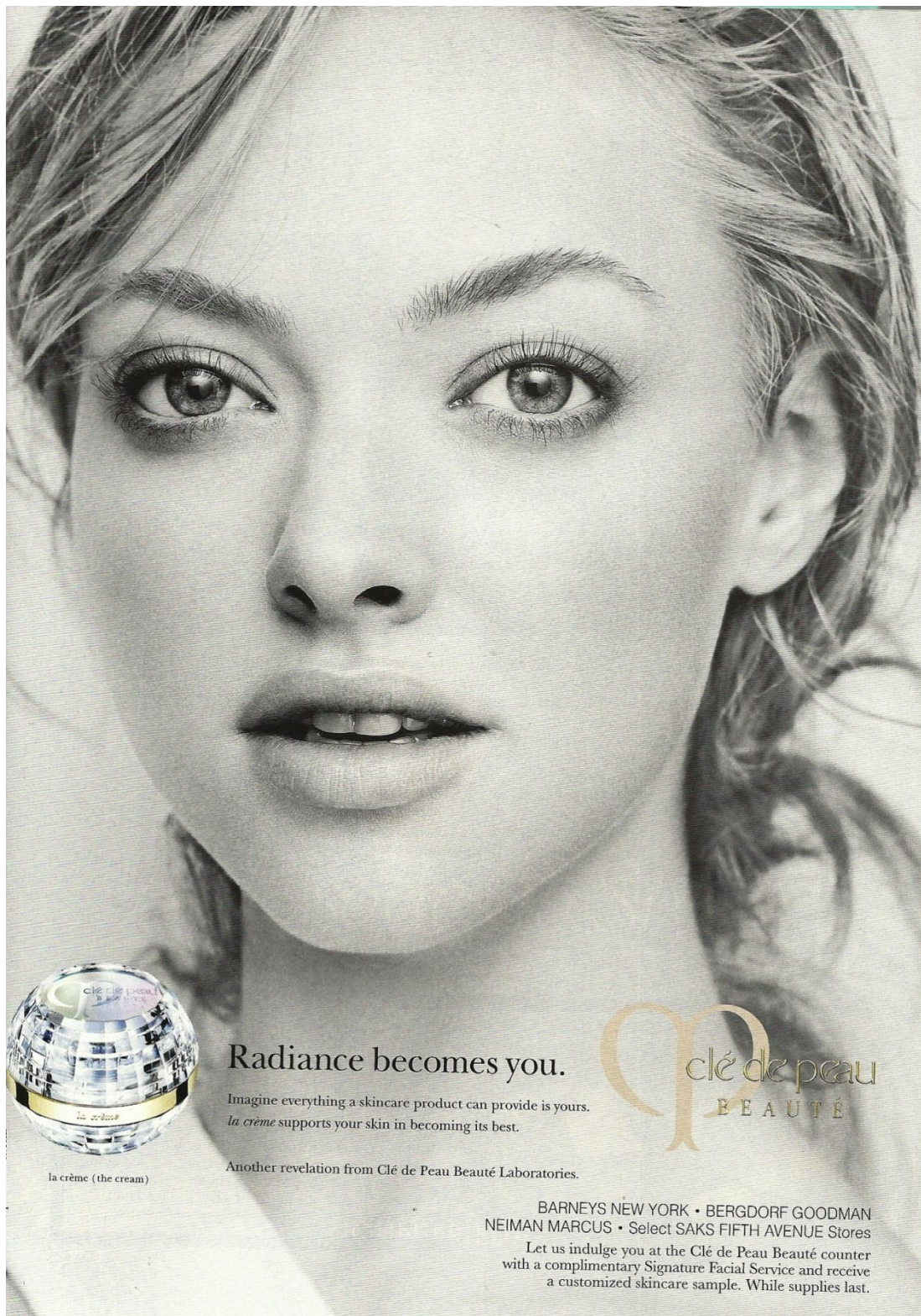
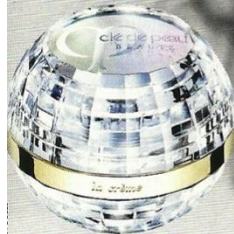


A10 Source: (*Vogue*, 2012, March, 363)





A11 Source: (*Vogue*, 2012, March, 381)

la crème (the cream)

**Radiance becomes you.**

Imagine everything a skincare product can provide is yours.  
*la crème* supports your skin in becoming its best.

Another revelation from Clé de Peau Beauté Laboratories.

clé de peau  
BEAUTÉ

BARNEYS NEW YORK • BERGDORF GOODMAN  
 NEIMAN MARCUS • Select SAKS FIFTH AVENUE Stores

Let us indulge you at the Clé de Peau Beauté counter  
 with a complimentary Signature Facial Service and receive  
 a customized skincare sample. While supplies last.



A12 Source: (*Vogue*, 2012, March, 455)



ELIE SAAB  
LE PARFUM

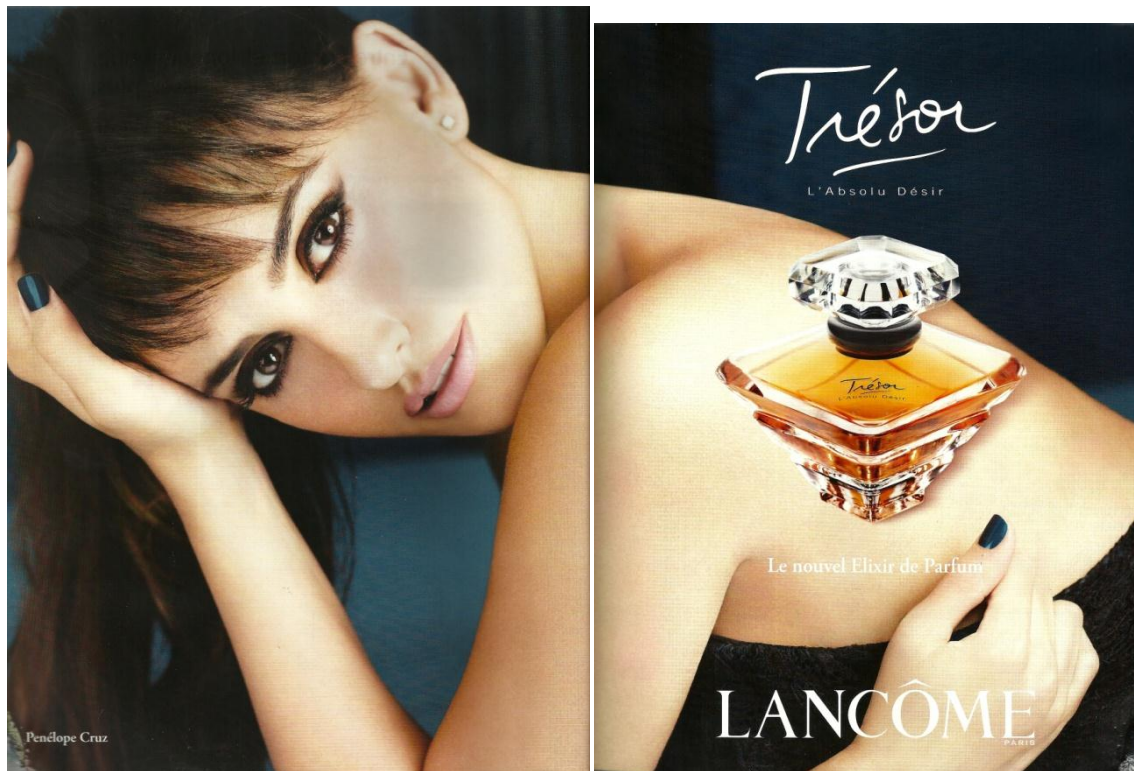


A13 Source: (*Vogue*, 2012, March, 477)



French (A14-25)

A14-A15 Source: (*French Vogue*, 2012, January, 3-4)



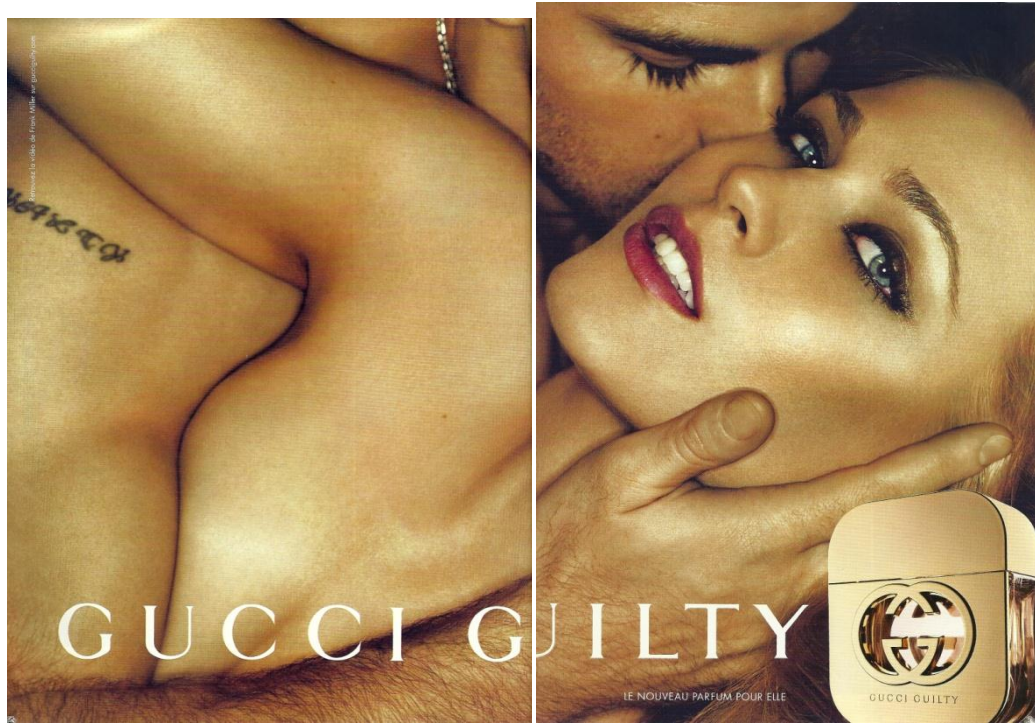


A16-A17 Source: (*French Vogue*, 2012, January, 21-22)





A18-A19 Source: (*French Vogue*, 2012, January, 24-25)

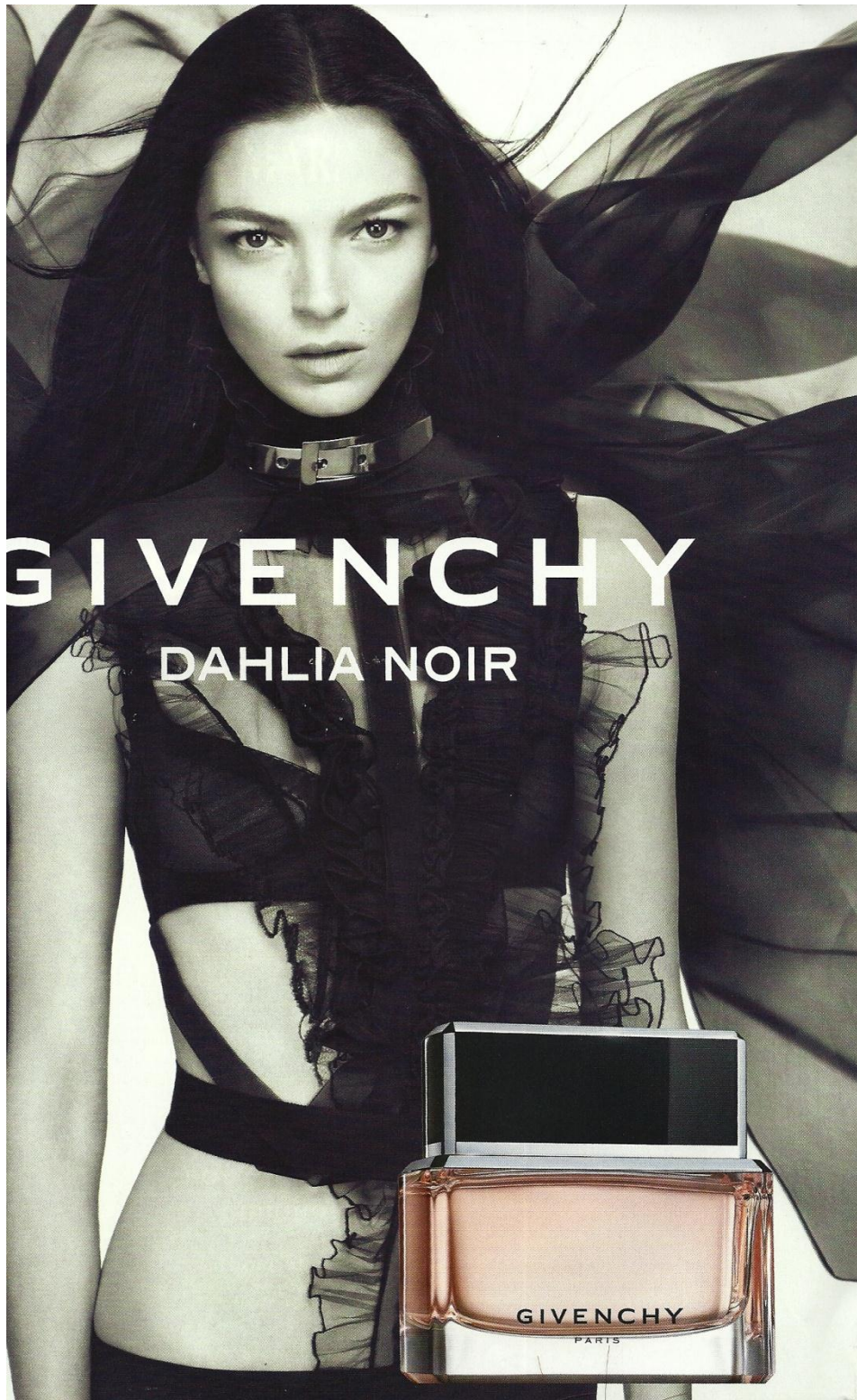


A20-A21 Source: (*French Vogue*, 2012, January, 40-41)





A22 Source: (*French Vogue*, 2012, January, 69)



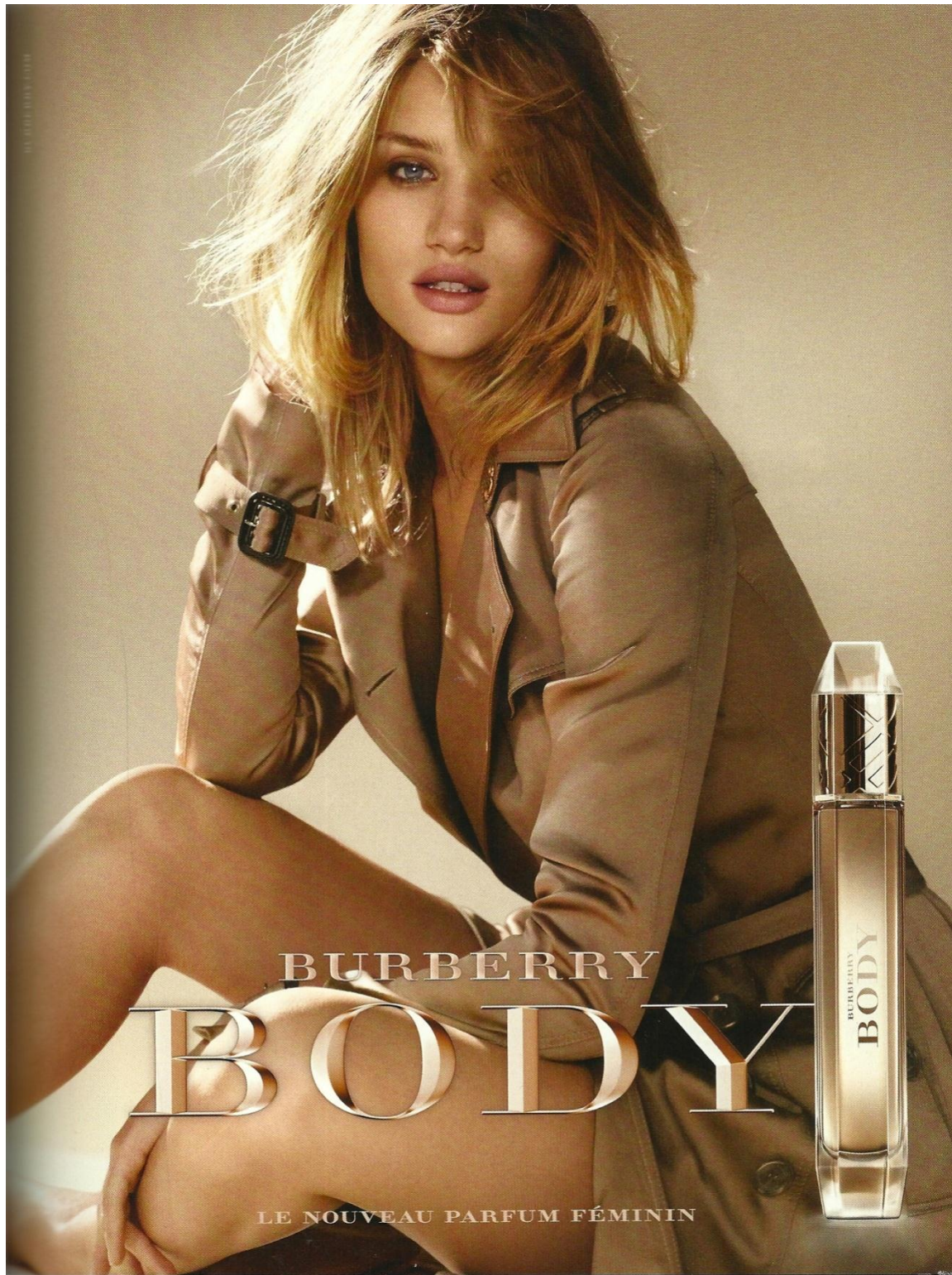


A23 Source: (*French Vogue*, 2012, January, 82)



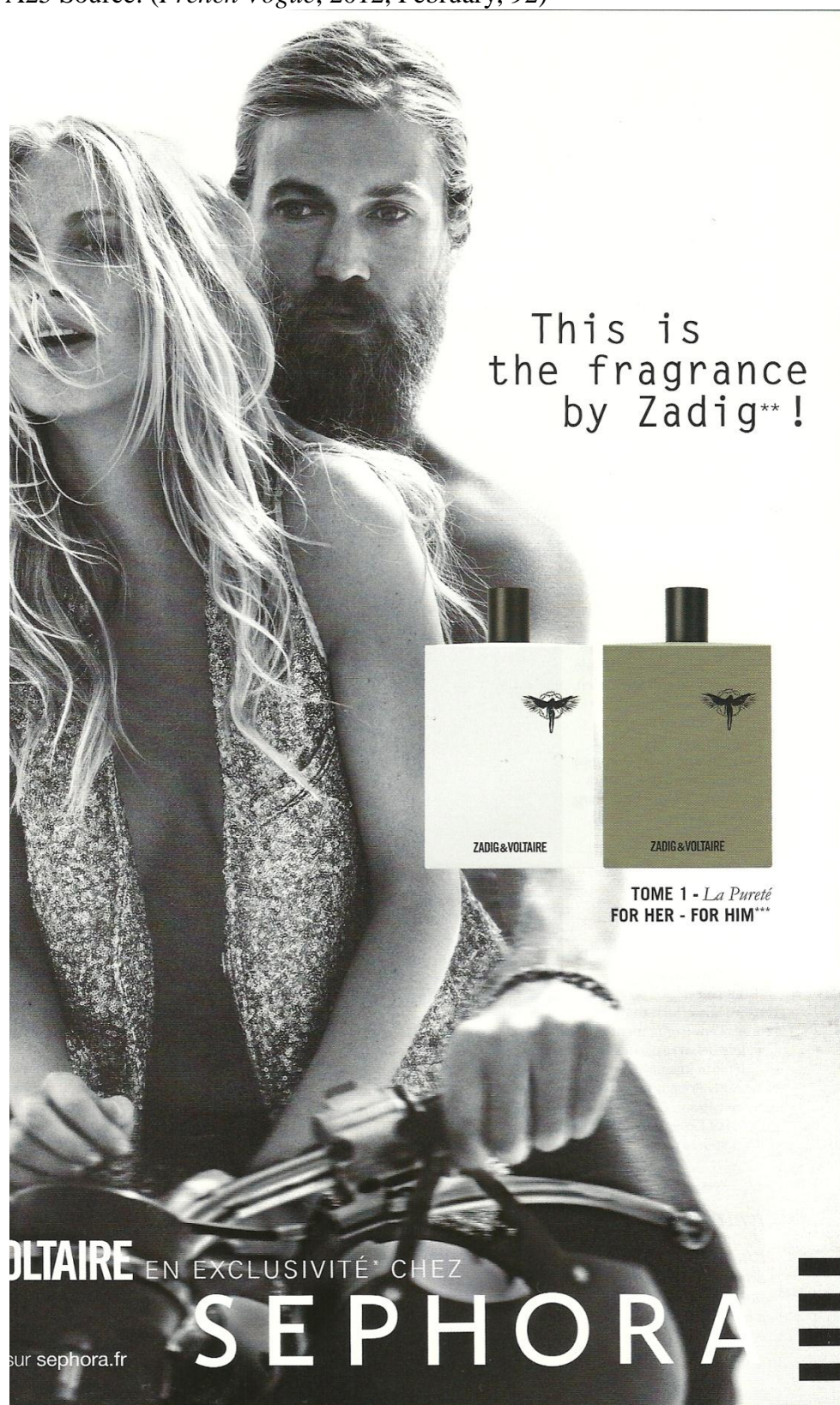


A24 Source: (*French Vogue*, 2012, January, 104)





A25 Source: (*French Vogue*, 2012, February, 92)



This is  
the fragrance  
by Zadig\*\*!



TOME 1 - *La Pureté*  
FOR HER - FOR HIM\*\*\*

**ZADIG & VOLTAIRE** EN EXCLUSIVITÉ\* CHEZ  
**SEPHORA**

sur sephora.fr

A26-A27 Source: (*French Vogue*, 2012, March, 55-56)

